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*Stated Meeting, November 15, 1901.*

Vice-President SELLERS in the Chair.

Present, 16 members.

Dr. Simon Flexner, a newly elected member, was presented to the Chair, and took his seat in the Society.

A letter was read from the Secretary of the "Délégation pour l'adoption d'une Langue Auxiliaire Internationale," inviting the Society to participate in its work and appoint a collaborator.

A list of donations to the Library was laid on the table, and thanks were ordered for them.

Prof. George F. Barker made some remarks on "The Monatomic Gases of the Atmosphere," and exhibited tubes of Neon, Krypton and Xenon, prepared by Prof. Dewar, of the Royal Institution.

The meeting was adjourned by the presiding officer.

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*Stated Meeting, December 6, 1901.*

Vice-President BARKER in the Chair.

Present, 23 members.

The Librarian laid upon the table the list of donations to the Library and thanks were ordered therefor.

Dr. George F. Barker read a memoir of the late Prof. F. A. Gent.

The death of the following members was announced:—

Dr. John Curwen, at Warren, Pa., July 2, 1901.

Dr. W. F. Norris, at Philadelphia, November 18, 1901.

Mr. Thomas Meehan, at Philadelphia, November 19, 1901.

Mr. Percival Lowell, of Flagstaff, Arizona, read a paper on "Explanation of the Supposed Signals from Mars of December 7 and 8, 1900."

The following annual reports were read :—

The report of the Treasurer.

The report of the Curators.

The report of the Hall Committee.

The report of the Publication Committee.

The report of the Library Committee.

The meeting was adjourned by the presiding officer.

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## EXPLANATION OF THE SUPPOSED SIGNALS FROM MARS OF DECEMBER 7 AND 8, 1900.

BY PERCIVAL LOWELL.

*(Read December 6, 1901.)*

1. On a certain morning in December, 1900, paragraphs appeared in the papers throughout the United States with the startling announcement that Mars had been signaling the Earth the night before. Lights, it was reported, had suddenly shone out upon the surface of the planet, lasted for a time and then vanished. What the signals meant was not so forthcoming. Vividness of headline made up for meagreness of news.

Interest was not confined to the United States. Reportorial inquisitiveness was as rife in the Old World as in the New, and Europe was behind America in the receipt of the message only the time necessary for its transmittal.

2. To broaden one's horizon is a good thing; and to broaden it beyond the bounds where horizon itself disappears, a still better one. But the broadening is apt to come not in a way we expect, and to prove the more broadening for that reason. I hope, therefore, not seriously to lessen interest in the phenomena by saying that they were certainly not what they were popularly taken to be, and were with equal certainty much which was not supposed and is quite as interesting.

The innocent cause of the misrepresentation was a dispatch sent